

terrific woodworker, and a lifelong member of the VFW, Post 9699, in Ashland.

For 240 years, patriotic Americans from small towns across this great country have fought for our freedoms and our way of life. Corporal Joe O'Clair of Ashland, Maine, was among 66,000 courageous veterans throughout Maine's Second Congressional District.

Thank you, Norm, for what you have given us. Your gift will last forever.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY POLICE OFFICER ASHLEY GUINDON

(Mrs. COMSTOCK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life of Prince William County Police Officer Ashley Guindon.

Ashley was 28 years old. She was shot and killed while responding to a domestic disturbance in Woodbridge, Virginia, on her first day on the job. She had just been sworn in the previous day, and the incident occurred only 90 minutes into her first training shift. She also had been serving her country and community as a member of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve.

She was a gifted and skilled officer, and this great sense of service that she had to her country and her community will be so missed by her family, friends, and colleagues on the force.

Twenty-eight years old. She represented the best of our youth, and her tragic murder is a reminder of the sacrifices that law enforcement in my district, in all of Virginia, and throughout our country make every day. We honor her service and her sacrifice and that of all of our dedicated, selfless law enforcement officers. They deserve our honor and respect every day.

I also ask that we continue to pray for her fellow officers, Jesse Hempen and David McKeown, who were also shot during this incident, and we pray for their full recovery.

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SUPREME COURT VACANCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege for me to once again stand on the floor of the House of Representatives along with my distinguished colleague from Ohio, Representative JOYCE BEATTY, coanchor of this CBC Special Order hour, this hour of power where, for the next 60 minutes, we will have an opportunity to speak directly to the American people about an issue of grave importance to the integrity of our democracy, and that is making sure that the United

States Senate fulfills their constitutional obligation to advise and consent as it relates to considering any Supreme Court nomination that President Obama sends up to that body.

We know that Justice Antonin Scalia has moved on after a long and distinguished career. Though I disagree with almost every single judicial opinion that he has issued, he served this Nation well.

Now that he has moved on, the Supreme Court, which is contained in Article III of the United States Constitution, has a vacancy. It is the obligation of the United States Senate to fill that vacancy by considering whatever nominee President Barack Obama sends forward.

Members of the United States Senate take an oath of office to faithfully discharge their responsibilities. When you look at Article II, section 2, of the United States Constitution, which gives the President the power to nominate someone to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court, it is the Senate that must consider that nominee.

Since the early part of the 20th century, there have been eight different Supreme Court nominees who have been voted on in an election year. Six of them actually were confirmed, but all eight of them received a hearing.

So, for the life of me, I can't figure out why Senator MITCH MCCONNELL thinks that he can get away with holding a nomination up without even the slightest bit of consideration. So we are going to explore that here today.

We will be joined by any number of distinguished Members of the House of Representatives and the Congressional Black Caucus, but let me proceed by yielding to my good friend and colleague from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY), my dynamic coanchor who does such a tremendous job on behalf of the people of the great State of Ohio and the city of Columbus.

Mrs. BEATTY. Thank you so much, Congressman JEFFRIES. It is certainly an honor and a privilege for me to join you this evening as coanchor for this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour.

Congressman JEFFRIES' scholarship and distinguished talents as a member of the Judiciary Committee have not gone unnoticed. I thank him for leading by example in challenging us to initiate and follow through in sending a message on Senate Republicans' refusal to act on the Supreme Court vacancy.

In part, tonight's Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour, Senate Republicans: Do Your Job, does just that.

As you reflected in your opening statement, Article II, section 2, of the Constitution expressly designates that the President has a duty to name and the Senate has a responsibility to advise and consent a nominee to fill the seat.

President Obama takes this very seriously. He has stated: "It's a decision to which I devote considerable time,

deep reflection, careful deliberation, and serious consultation with legal experts, members of both political parties, and people across the political spectrum."

But Republicans have made a decision to completely refuse consideration of anyone that President Obama nominates to the Supreme Court. In fact, they have stated that they won't hold a hearing or a vote before the full Senate.

Senate Democrats never acted so recklessly when faced with this situation in 1988, when there was a vote to confirm Justice Kennedy. There was no talk of doing nothing until after that year's election because it was unthinkable then to leave the Court short-handed for that long. And it remains so now.

The power of the Court, Mr. Speaker, is reflected in the work it does. Its decisions often shape the policy as profoundly as any law passed by Congress or any action taken by the President of these United States.

When we look back to our history, especially as African Americans, the importance of the decisions handed down by the Supreme Court cannot be overstated.

For example, most of us are familiar with *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, which reversed *Plessy v. Ferguson* and its "separate but equal" ruling.

Striking down segregation in our Nation's public schools provided a major catalyst for the civil rights movement and made advances in desegregating housing, public accommodations, and institutions of higher education possible.

After *Brown*, the Nation made some great strides towards opening the doors of education to all students. Unfortunately, the promise of the *Brown* decision remains unfulfilled in many ways.

More than 2 million Black students attend schools where 90 percent of the student body is made up of minority students. On average, schools serving more minority populations have less experienced, lower paid teachers who are less likely to be certified.

A report from the Center for American Progress found that a 10 percent point increase in students of color at a school is associated with a decrease in per-pupil spending of \$75.

In many ways, more than 60 years after *Brown v. Board of Education* school systems in the United States are still separate and unequal. And we are just not witnessing educational disparities at the elementary and secondary education level. College enrollment is racially polarized.

White students are overrepresented in selective colleges, which have more resources to educate and to support them, while African American students are overrepresented in less selective institutions.

Mr. Speaker and Congressman JEFFRIES, you see where I am going with that.